

Nursing Politics.

EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES.

A PRIVATE nurse member of the Royal British Nurses' Association informed us the other day that cases being scarce she had called upon a medical member of the Executive Committee of her Association, and on that ground asked him for work. She was met with a right royal snub.

"You have no claim whatever upon me," this gentleman informed her, "and I consider it grossly impertinent upon your part to have called at my private house with such a request."

Like most of her class, this nurse was diffident, and retired abashed. But the story points a valuable moral, both for nurses and the public, and both are made the more appropriate by the publication of an article headed "Employment Agencies," about which there is a fine Fardonian flavour, in this month's issue of the "official organ" of the Nurses' Association.

THIS article opens with the following statement: "Among benefits to nurses in the practice of their profession many members of the Royal British Nurses' Association are disposed to think that assistance in getting constant employment should take a prominent place. It is necessary, owing to constant misapprehension, to make it clearly understood, both to the public in general and to nurses in particular, that it is foreign to the spirit and design of the Corporation to undertake the functions of an employment bureau, and that it must always keep strictly aloof from interference with the relations between employers and employed in the profession."

THREE and a half columns follow on this subject, in almost every line of which we find a well thought out policy, purposely calculated to mislead the women who still cling to membership of the Association, in the hopes of thereby obtaining professional preferment.

To quote these grandiloquent sentiments, "the Corporation cannot take account of distinctions among its members. To exalt one would be to abase many. . . . Let the Corporation once assume any powers in assigning posts, or finding employment, and all sense of fairness and equality among the members must inevitably be lost. . . . It may be asked, then, can the Association take no part at all in the important movement spreading now to all parts of the kingdom for securing private nurses, together with constant employment, the enjoyment of their own earnings. Inasmuch as this movement is entirely concerned with the relations of employers

and employed, it may be emphatically repeated the Corporation can be in no way concerned with the workings of these popular "Co-operations" for Nurses. . . . As trading concerns, working for a profit, they are necessarily entirely outside the aims of the Association."

AND then there follows a most significant sentence, which we would ask our readers to note: "A Co-operation of this description may be regulated by a Committee of Management, and this Committee may or may not consist of members of this Association, but it could not be in any degree subject to the governing body of the Association, and may at any time, should it see fit, alter even the regulation which limits its membership to Registered Nurses of the Association."

A PARASITIC CO-OPERATION.

To expose the inspiration of this article, in all its meanness, it is only necessary to turn to the cover of the issue of the Journal which contains this article. The first advertisement which catches the eye, in pronounced type, is headed:

The Society of Chartered Nurses,

Under the Management of a Professional Committee.

A CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY OF THOROUGHLY COMPETENT NURSES.

Who have passed through at least Three Years' Hospital Training, and are Registered Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association.

NURSES RECEIVE THEIR OWN EARNINGS, LESS 7½ PER CENT. TO DEFRAY WORKING EXPENSES.

Then follows the address, etc. Beside it stands a sister advertisement.

THE MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL TRAINED NURSES' INSTITUTE.

—Thoroughly Experienced Nurses can be immediately obtained for Medical and Surgical Cases from the Sister-in-Charge, etc.

THESE two displayed advertisements appearing month after month on the pages of the "official organ" of the Royal British Nurses' Association (we hope they are paid for?), have naturally aroused a certain amount of curiosity in the minds of the readers of that Journal. Upon inquiry, it is found that the "Professional Committee," which dominates the Chartered Nurses' Society, is almost exclusively composed of the officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and the medical men and Matrons who have seats on its Governing Body and Executive Committee, and who have taken such an active part in depriving the nurses of their privileges under the old Bye-Laws, during the present year,

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